

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Sumy State University (Ukraine)
The College of New Jersey (USA)
Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges (Philippines)
European Danube Academy (Germany)
University of Kragujevac (Serbia)



Proceedings

STRATEGIC INNOVATIONS OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN PHILOLOGY IN CRISIS TIMES

I International Scientific and Practical Conference

1 June 2024

Sumy State University, Ukraine



Sumy 2024

**Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Sumy State University (Ukraine)
The College of New Jersey (USA)
Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges (Philippines)
European Danube Academy (Germany)
University of Kragujevac (Serbia)**

Proceedings

**STRATEGIC INNOVATIONS OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND
FOREIGN PHILOLOGY IN CRISIS TIMES**

I International Scientific and Practical Conference

1 June 2024
Sumy State University, Ukraine

Sumy 2024

UDC: 81'25'42:316.7(063)(0.034)

S88 Strategic Innovations of Social Communications and Foreign Philology in Crisis Times: collection of scientific paper of the I International Scientific and Practical Conference (1 June 2024) / responsible editor Nabok M., responsible designer Sadivnycha M. Sumy: Sumy State University, 2024. 351 p.

The collection includes scientific materials devoted to current problems in the field of distance teaching and learning in the era of digital technologies, in particular in language pedagogy, media innovations, modern translation, ethnolinguistics, stylistics, methods and methodologies of modern linguistic and literary disciplines. The composition of the collection is scientific research on the preservation of national identity and cultural heritage, intercultural communications, psychological theory and practice, sociological research.

For teachers of higher education institutions, graduate students, students, teachers of secondary schools, gymnasiums, lyceums and colleges, all those interested in socio-humanitarian issues.

The materials are printed in the author's editorial

Sumy State University, 2024

Radojevic M.

Master's student of Spanish Language and Hispanic Literature

University of Kragujevac

Kragujevac, Serbia

**STUDY EXPERIENCES OF HISPANIC STUDIES STUDENTS AT THE
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY AND ARTS DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC**

The pandemic of the Covid-19 virus in Serbia began in March 2020, when the state leadership adopted direct measures that temporarily closed preschools, schools and colleges. The newly created situation required quick reactions from professors and the reorganization of teaching, which moved from traditional, face-to-face, to online, distance learning. At the very beginning of the pandemic, the teaching staff of the Faculty of Philology and Arts of the University of Kragujevac received permission to adapt the classes to their needs and all professors were required to find the most adequate solution for teaching in these changed social circumstances. In this paper, we will focus on teaching during the pandemic at the Department of Hispanic Studies, with the aim of presenting the course of teaching, the methods and tools that were used, and the experience, judgment and attitudes of students, since the evaluation and improvement of each method of teaching should start exactly from how it performed for the main actors in that process. We will present the opinions of the students on the basis of a completed questionnaire, with which we examined the impressions of students of Hispanic studies who were in their first and second year of study during the pandemic.

Each of the professors found a different solution for this inconvenient situation that befell us, but most of them resorted to Google's learning platforms, primarily Google Classroom and Hangouts meet. Apart from these platforms, some of the professors also decided on the Trello platform, and some sent the material directly to the students by email. These exceptional circumstances forced the lecturers to turn to more modern approaches in teaching and information and communication

technologies, which were already applied at our faculty before the pandemic, but only partially and sporadically. However, although the use of these more modern tools has many advantages for the entire teaching, both for teachers and for students, we believe that their quick and sudden implementation caused a lot of difficulties for students, most of whom (according to the survey 73%) encountered for the first time these e-learning platforms only after the beginning of the pandemic. To the question: “Do you think that students and professors at the beginning of the transition to online teaching possessed satisfactory digital literacy?”, 45% of students answered No, 36% partially agree with that statement, and 18% believe that neither students nor professors were sufficiently prepared for the transition to online teaching. Although, in the opinion of the surveyed students, these platforms are easy to use, they admitted that it took them a while to get used to them. On the other hand, some of the respondents think that they are extremely useful and practical and that they helped them a lot, since they enabled them to have all the material at hand, in one place, distributed by teaching units and weeks.

The students almost unanimously agreed that the most adequate substitute for traditional teaching are the lessons held via Google Meet, since they enable open communication and interaction between teachers and students through video calls. The impossibility of instant resolution of doubts that may appear, many students objected to the teaching method used by some of the professors, who uploaded the intended materials and lessons to Google Classroom in the form of PowerPoint presentations, with audio explanations and guidelines for problematic parts which they should pay more attention to. Although they believe that teaching via Google Meet is the closest to face-to-face teaching, they still do not agree with the statement that this method of teaching is an adequate replacement for traditional teaching in classroom. The reason for this is primarily because the interaction is reduced and delayed due to various factors such as braking, interruption of the Internet connection, the appearance of microphonics, etc., which interfere with attention and reduce concentration.

It is evident that during the course of the online classes, the students encountered many difficulties and problems, and as the most frequent, they singled out the

following: lack of interaction with the professors, technical problems such as poor internet connection, weak sound and misunderstanding, lack of motivation, stiffness and headache caused by sitting in front of screens all day, distractions and inadequate space for following lessons in their own homes. Also, the impression of not actually attending the faculty, resulted in a weakening of work discipline and poor time management.

One of the most problematic things in the organization of online classes was the evaluation of knowledge and Partial exams were prepared in different ways. Instead of tests, some professors gave the students other pre-examination tasks, such as writing a seminar paper or making a presentation. Others composed tests to check knowledge via google questionnaires, and the rest held a colloquium via google meet, by publishing documents with tasks on google classroom, and the students were expected to solve the tasks on paper or in the Word application, then take a picture and post it on the classroom. Many students do not think that this way of checking knowledge is realistic and objective, since copying was greatly facilitated, and on the other hand, students who really prepared for the test often did not have enough time to demonstrate their knowledge because the duration was reduced to a minimum.

Most of the surveyed students stated that they did attend online lectures and exercises and that they turned on the microphone and camera when requested. Opinions are divided as to whether or not there is a difference in communication in person and via video meeting. Some students prefer to show up and actively participate when classes take place virtually, but for many, this form of communication created huge anxiety and discomfort, because all attention is focused on the speaker, and they often avoided attending online classes, so as not to find themselves in an unpleasant situation.

In the period of the global pandemic, when the media spread enormous fear and a feeling of uncertainty, day by day, the students found themselves in front of another challenge and novelty that created additional pressure for them and contributed to an increased feeling of anxiety and psychological overload. The majority of students agree that online teaching had a negative impact on their mental health and self-confidence. In addition to fear, feeling of being caught out and loneliness due to the lack of contact

with people, they also faced depression, stress, and confusion, and some even stated that they took tranquilizers because of it.

In conclusion, the students do not think that this type of teaching has many good sides, but they consider the fact that they could follow the lessons from the comfort of their own home to be its biggest advantage; mainly because it saved a lot of time for other activities and also money that they would otherwise spend on travel and rent. As a positive side, they also mentioned that circumstances forced them to learn to use online tools and platforms for learning and thereby improve their digital skills. However, the majority believes that online teaching only partially realized the desired results and they were disappointed with the ones achieved.

The students are aware that the situation we all found ourselves in was unexpected and that the professors did everything in their power to adapt to the new circumstances and way of working and make it as easy as possible for them to study and fulfill pre-examination obligations. They even believe that there are elements of online teaching that should be retained even after returning to classrooms, which is primarily the use of Google Classroom for posting materials and audio-explanations, holding consultations through G-meet meetings, as well as the use of other platforms and digital tools. It is clear that the attitude of the majority of students is that online teaching can never replace live teaching, but that with certain corrections it could be improved in case it is applied again in the educational system. First of all, they drew attention to the fact that it provides a lot of opportunities for more creative lesson plans and the use of various materials, which would greatly awaken the attention of students and encourage motivation. Also, they believe that the use of the Moodle platform (which is used at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade) would greatly contribute to a better organization of teaching, since it provides the possibility of direct communication between professors and students, access to complete teaching material, as well as the possibility of evaluating knowledge.

References:

Arsenijevic, Madjarev, Markov, Sapic, Simic (2021). Kvalitet i efektivnost

online nastave u visokom obrazovanju u vreme pandemije Covid-19.
<https://vaspitacka.edu.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Kvalitet-i-efektivnost-online-nastave.pdf>

Bozic, Novakovic (2020). Stavovi studenata srbistike prema platformama za elektronsko učenje (Google Classroom i Hangouts Meet).
<https://metodickividici.ff.uns.ac.rs/index.php/MV/article/view/1929/1991>

Selakovic (2021). Model obrnute ucionice na casovima spanskog kao stranog jezika u izmenjenom drustvenom kontekstu.
<https://pfunaucniskup.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/09-irena-selakovic-u-1.pdf>